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ABSTRACT

Communication scholars have only recently begun to consider internal processes of thought as essential components of interpersonal communication. In 1964 a reorientation of thinking to include intrapersonal processes as integral to the communication process was first urged. The "hidden other" refers to the wellspring of the mind and its role in intrapersonal communication. Intrapersonal communication is dominated by interpretations of the events that happen and the incoming data that the individual assimilates. Intrapersonal communication is influenced by the memories that are stored, the emotions that drive the individual, and the will that can be summoned to bear on the situation at hand. In addition, there is considerable mutual influence going on between the emotions, memories, interpretations, and intrapersonal communication. Those interactions determine what is dominant in intrapersonal communication. Therefore, self-talk must be governed by a compass point of faith and ethics that will reveal the distorted memories, damaged emotions, weak wills, and false interpretations that prevent us from seeing things as they really are and negatively influence the ways we talk to ourselves. Will, alone, is insufficient to enable the individual to see truth clearly. The spotlight of faith must go one step further. It is not enough merely to see the truth; faith must link up with will to enable the individual to do the right thing regarding that truth. (Thirty-four references are attached.) (RAE)

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THE HIDDEN OTHER WITHIN: AN ALTERNATIVE TO PSYCHO-BIOLOGICAL INTERPRETATIONS OF INTRAPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

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"Such as thy habitual thought, such also will be the character of thy mind; for the soul is dyed by the thoughts." --Marcus Aurelius

"Let us grow beautiful within, and may the inner and outer be one." --Socrates

"Thou desirest truth in the inward parts." --Psalms 51:6

"Educate that voice in your mind because you'll be listening to it for the rest of your life." --Dennis F. Kinlaw

"As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." --Proverbs 23:7

"To thine own self be true, and it shall follow as the night the day that thou canst not then be false to any man." --Shakespeare

"Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." --Proverbs 4:23

THE HIDDEN OTHER WITHIN: AN ALTERNATIVE TO PSYCHO-BIOLOGICAL INTERPRETATIONS OF INTRAPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

INTRODUCTION

Cognitive psychologists, neurophysiologists, and philosophers have written volumes trying to trace and explain the sources of creativity and the origins of thought. They have also been intrigued by the processes and the interaction of the various aspects of human perception. Communication scholars, on the other hand, have only recently begun to consider internal processes of thought as essential components of interpersonal communication. Bauer in 1964 first urged a reorientation of thinking to include intrapersonal processes as integral to the communication process (Roberts and Skinner, 1982).

Watzlawick's discussion of "punctuation" introduced the idea that an understanding of the perceptual processes of intrapersonal communication was the beginning of the communication process (Moran, 1982). In the past quarter-century, interactional and transactional views of communication have considered the interpretation of messages a critical dimension of human communication (Reusch and Bateson, 1968, McCroskey and Wheeless, 1976, Burgoon and Ruffner, 1978, DeVito, 1978) Barker, 1981, Brooks,1981 and Pearson and Nelson, 1982) thus was substantiated the concept that the meaning of a message is dependent upon the way that message is processed inside the minds of the communicators.

This paper attempts to integrate the biblical idea of "heart" into the interpretation process and focuses on this unseen "hidden" dimension of the mind and its role in intra-personal communication. By the "hidden other" we refer to the wellspring of the mind which is the source of thought and through which various elements of intrapersonal communi-cation are fused together. Further, this paper explores the role and significance of values and ethical standards in governing the hidden dimension of intrapersonal communi-cation.

Because few communication scholars have been trained for scientific research into cognitive processes (Korba, 1987 summarizes studies to date) and because it is difficult to examine and scientifically analyze processes that take place inside the mind (Barker and Edwards, 1980), there has been considerable controversy over whether we can legitimately examine intrapersonal elements as part of the communication process. This paper takes the position stated so well by Reusch and Bateson (1968) that intrapersonal phenomena control perception and that perception changes an individual's information, therefore examining the intrapersonal influences on the communicator is an indispensable aspect of the total communication process.

Further, this paper takes the position that neurophysiological research into the physical processes by which the brain functions is not the only means--perhaps not even the best means--to come to an understanding of the nature of intrapersonal communication and its impact on the full range of human communication.

The thoughts in this paper are offered as an alternative to the existing, but mostly mechanical, psycho-biological explanations of the intrapersonal communication process. It is our view that careful evaluation of perceptual activity that can be observed coupled with logical inferences regarding the character of what is non-observable can enrich our understanding and appreciation of intrapersonal communication processes.

A FUNCTIONAL VIEW OF INTRAPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

Both James Rest, a contemporary psychologist and Soren Kierkegaard, a 19th century Danish philosopher have written about the interdependence of what we call intrapersonal functions (described by Anderson, 1987). Our description of the intrapersonal communication process consists of five elements or functions as shown in Figure 1. All of these elements affect the "self-talk" that is produced in the mind. The fact that the mind can (1) somehow originate thoughts, (2) monitor, evaluate, and choose among alternative thoughts, and (3) alter, switch, or cease from a particular line of thought is a manifestation of its multidimensional nature.

For the purposes of this paper, we will examine those various dimensions according to their function. "Function is determined by the structure in which the function takes place" (Duncan, 1968). "Functions serve as the basis for purposes. Purposes are built upon functional relationships" (Dance and Larson, 1976).

Memory. The memory function refers to the storage and recall of information about stimuli and events. Memory operates in two modes: (a) "spontaneous" recall, that is, it automatically processes data in response to a recognized or unrecognized stimulus and (b) "directed" recall where stored data is recalled through specific efforts.

Emotions. The emotion function refers to those varieties of mental activities which we describe as feelings, needs, moods, drives, desires, or states of being. Emotions can be controlled or uncontrolled, deep or surface, recognized or hidden, dominant or submerged.

Interpretation. The interpretation function has three dimensions or levels--intuitive, logical, and moral. These varieties of mental activity nearly always occur in conjunction with other functions of the intrapersonal process and is a connecting link between the various other functions. Interpretation attaches meaning to the memories and emotions. It does this either through (a) intuition which is the most primitive form of thought in that it springs directly from the hidden in an unprocessed form often without any type of corroborative support, or through (b) logical analysis, which is the type of conscious thought and deliberation of which we have the fullest awareness, or through (c) moral judgments which can be reflexive or deliberative.

The Hidden Inner Core. Deep within the mind is the well-spring of all the other functions which we will refer to as the hidden inner core. This area, which cannot be observed directly, but can only be known by inference, is the source and origin of most of our self-talk. (We note that Luft, 1969 used the term "hidden self," but he focused on the semantic symbols unique to a specific individual.)

Our awareness of our thoughts and feelings occurs only "after the fact." We may quickly draw an inference as to what events and stimuli caused us to generate particular thoughts or feelings in self-talk and do so with such speed that we feel satisfied with our understanding of the process by which they came into being. But understanding the stimuli which triggered the thoughts and/or feelings is not the same thing as understanding the creation of the thought or feeling, i.e., the nature of the creative process by which it was generated. The hidden other includes an unseen, mysterious world with spiritual dimensions that we cannot observe in process; we can only see the created product that results from it.

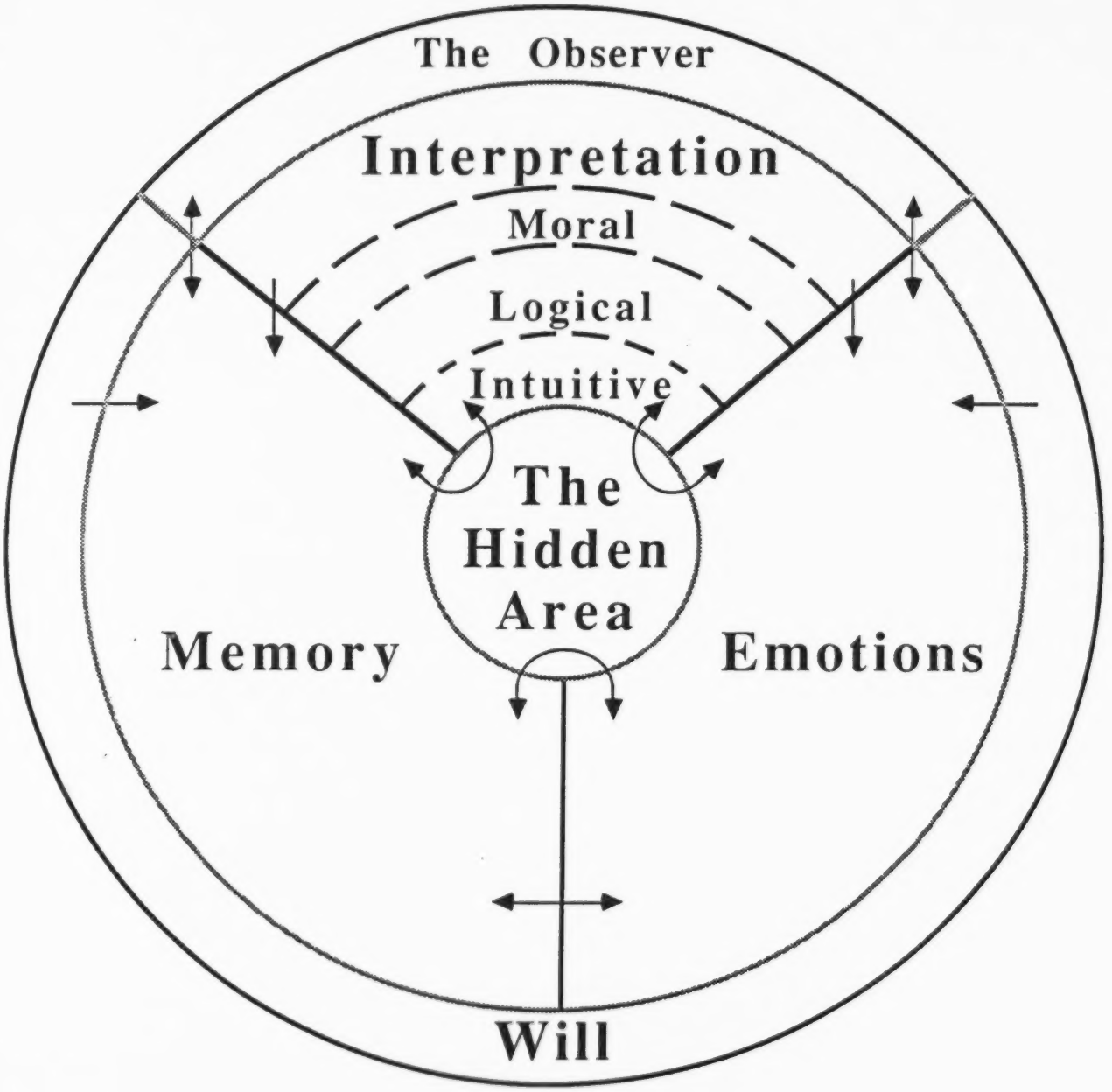

Figure 1: Crouse Model of Intrapersonal Communication

Will. The will refers to the function of conscious choice which helps to determine the balance, power, influence and relative involvement of the various functions of intrapersonal communication.

RELATIONSHIPS OF THE COMPONENT FUNCTIONS

There are linkages or pathways of interaction and interconnectedness between the five functions of our view of intrapersonal communication. (See Figure 2). These linkages are like Somerset Maugham's description of his memories as more like a web than a linear, chronological progression (Jensen, 1987). We see significance in the relationships of the component functions of intrapersonal communication. Even so, not all of the pathways are within the range of observation; some of the interconnections occur on the boundary of the hidden inner core and can only be known by inference. While we can only know the linkages connecting the "hidden other" of the inner core through indirect means, those of the other functions are more obvious.

Interconnections of the Memory Function. The memory is intimately connected to the other four functions in that both raw data and interpreted data are stored in the memory. We can to a degree instruct the memory to disgorge information on command. On the other hand, there are times when the memory appears to operate spontaneously and recollections can pop up--unbidden--sometimes to our inconvenience or discomfort in a most unsettling manner. The nature of this process is indicative of a linkage with the hidden.

There are direct pathways between the emotions and memory. We can, under duress or extreme emotion, block recall or perform amazing feats of memory. Sensory stimuli that affect the emotions can trigger memories. Emotional states affect the degree of awareness of memories. The recall of some memories simultaneously triggers emotional responses; just as some memories are inseparable from the emotions with which they are associated.

There are also direct and indirect pathways between memory and the other three functions--will, interpretation and the hidden core. The will can be used to govern, to focus, draw attention to, emphasize or suppress the memories. Interpretation gives meaning to the memories and judges their validity, importance, rightness or wrongness. The overlap with the hidden other is a repository for suppressed or unrecallable memories as well as those memories that are just below the surface, but are poised ready to bubble-up to consciousness at a moment's notice.

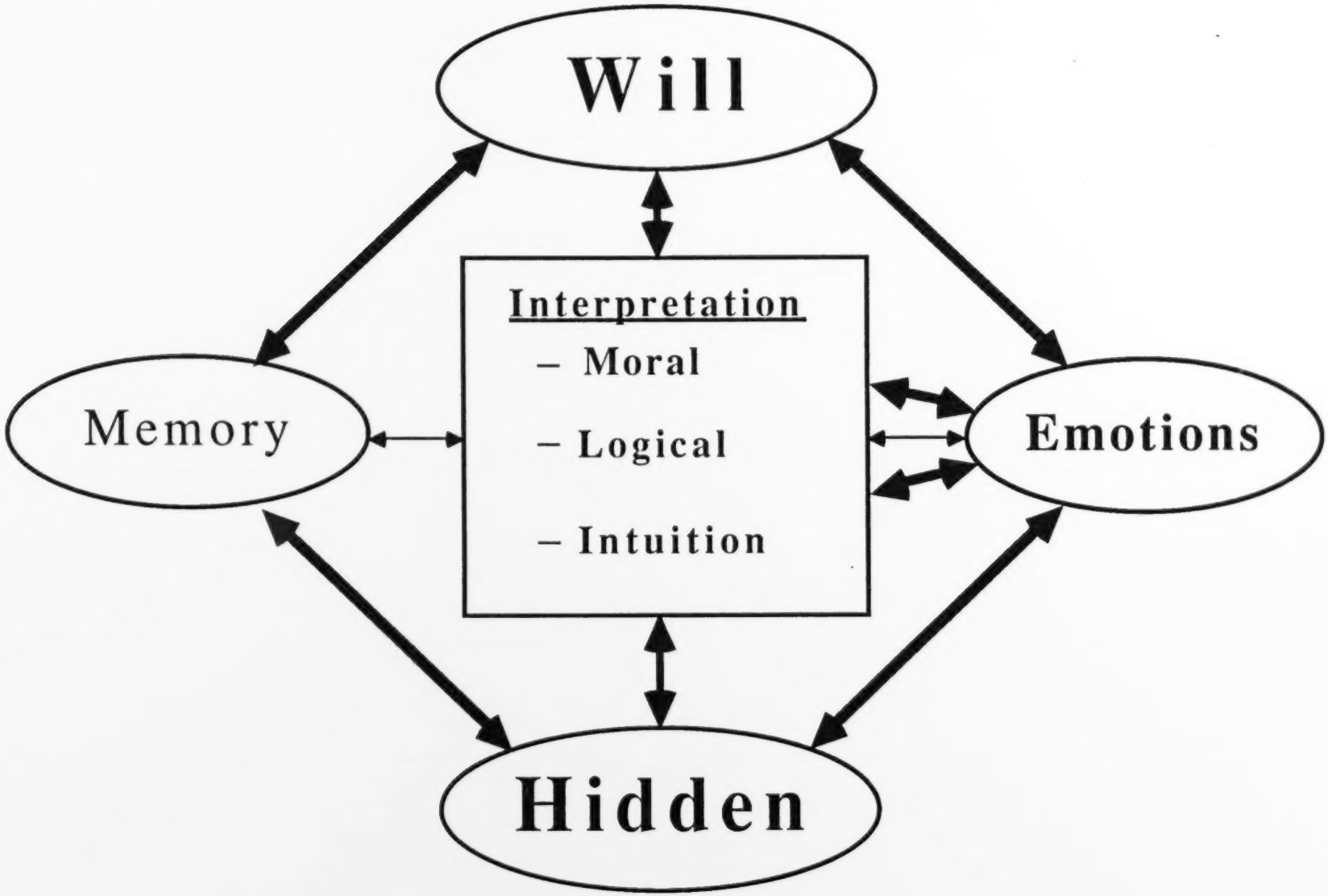

Figure 2: Interconnections of the Five Functions

The interactions among memory, the will and interpretation play a very important role in intrapersonal communication because those interconnections determine the self-talk the results of which will be examined in subsequent sections which focus on the other three functions. Andre Malraux wrote, "One day we will realize that we are distinguished as much from each other by the forms our memories take as by our characters." (Quoted in Jensen, 1987) Jensen also quoted Lance Morrow who wrote, "The past inhabits and defines us--and often haunts us. We need to go back to it, to sift it, in order to know who we are and how we became what we are."

Interconnections of the Emotion Function. The emotions are our drives, motivations and needs, our wants and desires, and our feelings. Emotions can affect the other four functions to the point of immobilization; they can also give incredible energy and direction. Thus, emotions impact in subtle and dramatic ways to our detriment or benefit. The importance of the interpretation and will in influencing the emotions cannot be overemphasized, because interactions of the emotions in intrapersonal communication have a powerful influence on perception and hence the meanings attached to events.

Of all the functions, the emotions are most susceptible to conditioning and habit and are the least susceptible to the direct control of the logical and moral dimensions of interpretation. The emotions frequently link up with the intuitive dimension of interpretation to short-circuit the functioning of the higher logical and moral dimensions of interpretation. As mentioned earlier, certain emotional responses can become so fused with particular memories that they become inseparable. Emotion thus has the power to color the memories interacting with the hidden core to the point that they have negative and destructive impact on the self-concept and sense of worth.

When the emotional dimension dominates intrapersonal communication, habitually distorted memories fuse to the hidden core. When that happens, the tone of life is affected because the resultant negative self-talk becomes established and ingrained and thus impacts the mood and feelings and eventually the state of being for the individual.

Conversely, when the emotions are under the control of the will and directed by the logical and moral dimensions of the interpretation, there can be very positive benefits to the person's emotional self-talk and thus their sense of well-being. All of which points to the importance of bringing the emotions under the governance of the will and the logical and moral interpretation functions of intrapersonal communication.

Interconnections of the Interpretation Function. Self-talk can be viewed as the articulation of our interpretations of events and/or persons, memories and emotions. Thus it is imperative that we listen, know, and understand the role of the interpretation function in our intrapersonal communication. Further, it is even more important that we be able to evaluate the interpretation function in light of moral, ethical, and/or biblical standards.

Intuitive Interpretation refers to our spontaneous, non-deliberative "gut-level" evaluations stemming from our accumulated experience. The intuitive interpretation is a short-circuiting of the rational deliberative dimension of intrapersonal communication. It can occur in several ways. It can be an habitual response related to a recurring phenomenon or in the case of a unique phenomenon, it may be purely instinctual. These primal, intuitive interpretations may spring from the hidden core in reponse to extraordinary or long-endured need, crisis, stress, or demand.

The habitual, almost continual intuitive interpretation is a variety of self-talk that may be aptly characterized as "murmuring," a subliminal running commentary on life. At its lowest volume, this habitual type of self-talk may pass unnoticed. This murmuring gives voice to our basic mood, our prevailing attitudes and our fundamental "life orientation" which is the term used by Barker and Edwards, 1980.

There is a phrase in an old civil war spiritual that refers to what we are calling intuitive interpretation, "He never said a mumbling word," a reference to self-talk that typifies a state of mind, heart and being. These intuitive messages reveal the state of the soul.

Eventually, usually imperceptably, primal murmuring slips into and takes hold in our conscious thinking or something happens to bring to the fore these "gut-level," attitudes that are so reactive and reflexive. Since the immature, untutored state of this voice is selfish, self-centered and given to self-pity, anger, resentment and rationalization, we must learn to be aware of our primal murmurings in order to analyze and learn the nature of their messages. We can learn to capture the resultant self-talk and subject it to the standard of objective truth. By conscious selection and rejection of non-truthful elements of this subliminal level of self-talk, we can alter the content and therefore the conditions within the hidden inner core that produce these intuitive, murmuring interpretations.

Logical Interpretation. The dimension of logical interpretation is the center of conscious rational thought and deliberation. The interconnections of logical interpretation with all of the other functions of intrapersonal communication has already been raised. It is this area of logical evaluation and interpretation of our conscious thought where analysis, critical thinking and

problem-solving comes into play. Certainly Kinlaw's admonition is immensely insightful--"Educate the voice in your mind because you'll be listening to it for the rest of your life." This statement implies the critical interaction between the level of conscious thought where education occurs and reflexive thought or murmuring self-talk which determines the quality of life.

We use the phrase "I've been arguing with myself" to refer to our logical deliberations in intrapersonal communication. It is necessary to develop the capacity for monitoring the murmuring level of self-talk so as to logically analyze and draw inferences regarding the messages coming from the hidden area. Consciously examining self-talk and interpreting it helps to prevent rationalizations from creeping in and facades of rhetoric, religious ideology, philosophy and theology from developing at the conscious level which have no relation to the hidden reality. By capturing the self-talk and subjecting it to logical interpretations, we can make it say the truth.

Others who frequently interact with us on an intimate level can see directly or by implication the condition of the hidden inner core from both our nonverbal and verbal communication. Aldous Huxley once wrote, "To see ourselves as another person sees us is a most salutary gift." If we are willing to submit ourselves to accountability in relationships we can avoid being blinded by the filters of rationalization so easily put in place when there are no corrective forces to oppose them.

Insight into the logical ramifications of self-talk requires careful training of the mind in discernment and analysis. It is axiomatic, however, that "the unexamined life is not worth living;" the biblical admonition states "keep thy heart with all diligence for out of it flows the issues of life."

Moral/Ethical Interpretations. For the religious and non-religious alike, persons use moral and ethical standards to assess and interpret their thoughts and actions. Berne and Harris stress the "existential position" in influencing interpretation and Smith and Williamson discuss essentially the same idea with the term "communication stance." (Moran and Halfond, 1982) For others, this function is simply referred to as conscience. Everyone deliberates regarding what is "right" or "wrong," therefore, the interconnections between the moral/ethical interpretation and other dimensions is very important. Without interaction between the moral interpretation function and the emotions, the prevailing standard can become "what's right is what feels good." Without interaction with the hidden area there is little opportunity for self-talk to be governed by moral standards and values. Without interaction with the memory we lose the benefits of the precepts of experience. Without interactions with the will, we cannot act upon what we determine is right.

Interconnections of the Will Function. The will is the key to control of all of the other aspects of intrapersonal communication because the will determines the conscious focus of our thoughts, our choices and actions. The will can focus attention on one particular dimension--a memory or an emotion. The will can force the logical interpretation of those memories or emotions. The will can dictate that a moral or ethical standard be applied to evaluate a memory's "truthfulness" or its "rightness," e.g., whether or not a thought or memory is "fair" or "kind.".

The will can do all of the above, but it doesn't always succeed because it can be overpowered by the emotions and by aspects of the hidden area that sabotage the efforts of the will. "Those things that I would do, I do not do and those things that I would not do, I do." Thus, the self-talk is key in determining which dimension prevails.

Further, will alone cannot assure "rightly dividing the truth." The pathways of interconnection between the will, the moral interpreter, and the hidden area must be carefully developed and nurtured. Kierkegaard wrote that self-monitoring and self-regulation were vital in regard to the will because of the necessity for discipline in acquiring knowledge and thinking clearly. (Anderson, 1987) Thus, the will must be directly linked to the areas of moral and logical interpretation.

Interconnections of the Hidden Area Function. As can be seen in Figure 1, our model of the intrapersonal communication process, the hidden area is linked directly or indirectly to every other area. (Robert Sorenson argues that values stem from self-talk and that those values then influence intra and interpersonal communication. Woodard, 1980) The hidden area has impact on all the other functions--"As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." As the well-spring of the creative and spirit dimension of self-talk, the hidden affects everything else.

The outputs of the hidden inner core are our primal attitudes, moods, creative ideas, thoughts, and feelings. They reveal our nature, character and the condition of our inner being. John W. Burton from the University of Maryland at College Park, stresses the need to "find ways of understanding the hidden motives and values" because until those elements are determined, "We can't get to the next step of deciding what to do about a conflict."

In addition, not only does self-talk reflect the content of the hidden it shapes the condition of the hidden core, as well. Epictetus, the Roman philosopher, wrote, "Men are disturbed not by things, but by the view that they take of things." The biblical principle says that people should "walk in the light" in order to have good relationships with each other; distortions and misinterpretations which feed into the hidden core if perpetrated and rationalized over a

long period of time result both in a divorce from reality and ultimately in erosion of our relationships.

Kierkegaard wrote that we need to constantly monitor what we call the hidden other. Kierkegaard wrote:

> We procrastinate, suppress conscience, repress unpleasant facts, deny unworthy acts and impulses remain uncommitted, or fail to follow through on good intentions. Can there be any doubt then, that we are morally responsible for the way we communicate with ourselves . . . self communication appears to be the primary process of the moral life (Anderson, 1987).

The remainder of this paper will be devoted to exploring the ramifications of the hidden area on all of our self-talk.

THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS FAITH IN THE FUNCTIONING OF THE SYSTEM

If religious faith and experience is meaningful in the sense of making us different than we otherwise would be, it must have an impact on the way we perceive, react, feel, think, and act. In other words, what de Tocqueville and later Bellah et. al. described as "habits of the heart" unite to create a unified way of viewing life. That is, the nature and kind of mental and emotional condition or states we experience, along with our emotional response patterns and behavioral patterns must be influenced by our hidden other that is changed and governed by the "light" of faith which both illuminates and guides the various functions and the diverse pathways of interconnections in our intrapersonal process.

Carl Rogers, the noted psychologist, is reported to have said that therapy is designed to restore healthy communication within oneself (Woodard, 1980). Self-talk is both the reflection of our personality and the instrument which shapes it. We know that the facial expression of older adults stems from their thoughts--what they have been saying to themselves abou the events and conditions of their lives. Faith and the accompanying values and moral standards serve to harness and direct self-talk. The existance of standards limits the effectiveness of rationalizing in deceiving and misleading us. Further, religious values and standards serve to help liberate us from the "unreality" of our self-deceptions and leads us to forego vengeful self-talk and thus liberates us from hatred and bitterness.

The tone as well as the content of our self-talk influences us and psychologists stress the importance of

examining self-talk as a means of maintaining good mental health (Ellis, 1984). What we referred to earlier as the murmuring level becomes the tone of our self-talk. At first, murmuring is not readily apparent. It can only be seen by implication, but once it is recognized we can begin to look for it and then control it. Learning to listen to the murmurings of the mind is the first step in recognizing our true "feeling level," deep-seated, values, attitudes, needs, beliefs, drives, etc. (Rokeach describes these "primitive beliefs" as not based on or maintained through interactions with others. They stem, he believes, from our individual perspectives of life.) It is easy to accept the facade of rationalized motivations and deny the factors that are operative at the reactive, reflexive, intuitive level. Only sensitized absorption of well-developed religious faith into the hidden area can counteract the pervasive tendencies of the murmurings.

Faith must provide us with: (1) the moral standards and values by which to judge the appropriateness of our self-talk, (2) a commitment to knowing the truth of what we are, (3) a commitment to imposing truth and moral values upon our thought, attitudes, and actions. Faith and moral standards serve to harness and direct our self-talk. The existence of standards limits the ability of anger, pride, selfishness, lust--all ego-motivated self-rationalizing self-talk--to deceive and mislead us.

Commitment to moral standards serves to help liberate us from the "unreality" of our self-deceptions, to help us resist selfish and lustful thinking and the associated erosion of character and relationships, and to help us forego resentful, vengeful self-talk which leads to bitterness and hatred. The practice of positive thinking is based on the fact that we can chose to replace murmuring self-talk with consciously selected self-talk.

By imposing the above-mentioned, faith-based moral standards, we can--with the sustained effort of will over time and with the help of grace--shape and condition the hidden other so that it is characterized by truth and goodness. Our memories can be reconstituted as we attach correct interpretations to the events that have occurred and will occur in our lives. The emotions can be healed. Our divided and multiple personalities can become integrated into a unified whole that exhibits consistency and true integrity.

CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY

Intrapersonal communication is a key ingredient in both shaping and manifesting a person's thoughts, attitudes, emotional responses and memories. Intrapersonal communication thus largely determines what constitutes the personality. We view self-talk as the subliminal voice of

the hidden as well as the conscious voice of rational thought. Thus, self-talk expresses who we are and conversely determines who we become. In that context, the biblical admonition to "keep thy heart with all diligence" becomes an imperative because the self-talk, thus viewed, shapes and perpetuates its image. Like Loren Reid (Nelson and Pearson, 1982) we see intrapersonal communication as pervasively practical in that it is linked to and shapes our interpretation of the ordinary occurances of everyday life. Further, like Carl Rogers, we believe "that which is most personal is most general" (quoted in Jensen, 1987).

In summary, intrapersonal communication is dominated by our interpretations of the events that happen and the incoming data that we assimilate. Further, our intrapersonal communication is influenced by the memories that are stored, the emotions that drive us, and the will that can be summoned to bear on the situation at hand.

In addition, there is considerable mutual influence going on between the emotions, memories, interpretations and will. Those interactions determine what is dominant in intrapersonal communication. For instance, memories can be distorted and emotions can be driven by base feelings some of which can be disguised beyond recognition. Will, which is amoral, can be weak when it should be strong. Interpretations can be corrupted by rationalizations and distortions.

Therefore, our self-talk must be governed by a compass point of faith and ethics that will reveal the distorted memories, damaged emotions, weak wills, and false interpretations that prevent us from seeing things as they really are and negatively influence the ways we talk to ourselves. Will, alone, is insufficient to enable us to see truth clearly; The ability to "rightly divide the word of truth" comes from shining the spotlight of faith onto the hidden core to see the real motivations and the reality of the situation at hand.

But the spotlight of faith must go one step further. It is not enough to merely see the truth, faith must link up with will to enable us to do the right thing regarding that truth.

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